

Hatarqa

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[Korath_Desert](#).



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Hatarqa or **Hatar'a**, depending on the dialect (Hatarian: *Land of Rupture* or *Land of Breaking*), is a nation located to the southwest of the Korath Desert, with its natural entry point situated midway between the end of the Tir Tochair Mountains and the beginning of the Barraye Mountains. The latter, together with the Ardawanne Mountains, separate the harsh desert from the equally arid region of [Barsa](#).

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Hatarqa



General information

Variation(s)	Hatar'a
Status	Absolute Layered Pentarchy
Ruler	Hatarian Monarchy

Societal information

Official Language	Hatarian
Demonym	Hatarian

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Borders

The country has only four major borders: to the south, the Nilfgaardian province of [Ruach](#) and the Barraye Mountains; to the east and north, the Korath Desert; and to the west, more desert, as well as the Tir Tochair Mountains along most of that side once one reaches the edges of the Korath.

Climate

The climate is similar to that of the rest of the Korath Desert, that is, a very hot desert climate, almost uninhabitable. It would be so if not for the lakes of semi-arid Ruach—massive aquifer pockets that burst and eventually surfaced—located in the Siwan Wastes, a dry, uninhabited steppe that gradually becomes the Great Korath Desert (these lakes are, in fact, the reason why the area begins as steppe rather than full desert).

These lakes feed the [Loernach](#), a tributary of the Alba River. Through evaporation, they generate clouds that travel and eventually discharge over Hatarqa due to its proximity. After releasing their rainfall, these clouds continue eastward into the Korath, where they dissipate.

As a result, despite having no coastline, the climate resembles that of a coastal desert—a break from the norm within the Frying Pan.

History

Very Ancient Times

Like the rest of the Korath, the land that would become Hatarqa was once green. However, climatic changes that occurred over the ages led to its desertification.

Due to the vast quantity of fossils found in what would later become its mines, it appears that this was once an exceptionally rich biological region. This would eventually lead its inhabitants to sell these remains as curiosities to both local and foreign collectors.

Pre-Human Times

No known non-human civilization is believed to have inhabited the area. Not even the elves, as the exiled members of the Aen Seidhe and other elven groups—the ancestors of the Aen Manche—arrived when the region was already inhabited by humans and thus, they were the [Aen Manche](#).

However, ruins have been found in Hatarqa. Though poorly preserved due to heavy erosion, they are unmistakably ruins, and their dating indicates that they must have been of non-human origin.

What little remains resembles ruins found deeper within the desert, referred to by human groups such as the Mardu as [Boholo va Kale](#) (the Old Civilization). The prevailing theory proposed by Nilfgaardian archaeologists suggests that these were gnomish constructions, and that the region may have been the place of origin of the gnomes back when the land was still green. According to this theory, the gnomes would have imitated the more mysterious ruins of the deeper desert, which are believed to be even older.

The Arrival of Humans

Humans appeared in the region, unlike in other places, around 130 Before the Resurrection.

In this case, they came from the Leinthzilci-as-ita-Calusuouf ([Vampire Language: Gerontocracy of the Great Promise](#)), the vampiric state that once stretched from Toussaint to the southern parts of what is now Ruach. This migration was a result of an internal civil war among vampires at the time, which led the three “*clans*” (the term is more complex, but “*clan*” is the closest approximation) to disperse in different directions to avoid mutual destruction. This conflict also led their elders to eventually become the Unseen Elders of later times.

As for the humans, they moved as part of the “*livestock*” that effectively “*escaped*” during the conflict. This led to their arrival in what is now Ruach.

They formed part of the first human groups to settle in the area, which explains their (albeit distant) kinship with the Ruache people. However, a portion of them, still fearful that their “*masters*” might come searching for them once the conflict ended, continued beyond Ruach and into the Korath. There, they found the region dangerous enough to deter the vampires from pursuing them, which convinced them to settle—and, unknowingly at the time, give rise to Hatarqa.

It is also worth noting that the roots of Hatarqa’s patriarchal structures, and possibly even its religion, may originate in this period, shaped by the treatment humans received under vampire rule.

The Formation of Hatarqa (130 B.R – 8 A.R)

The country of Hatarqa took a long time to form. Its early stage can be divided into five distinct layers.

Roughly from 130 to 30 B.R, the region consisted of a confederation of various nomadic human tribes spread across the territory.

During this period, the so-called *War of the Blind* took place (named for being fought during the fog season). It arose as the interests of the different tribes increasingly diverged over that century of coexistence. This ultimately shattered the confederation permanently through conflict and marked the transition into the second stage.

The Zaqaphs Period

The Zaqaaaphs period (Old Hatarian: *joining together, elevations*) spans from 1 After the Resurrection to the 3rd century.

It is marked by the emergence of the country's first cities. From this stage—along with other factors—arise their distinctive forms. These cities would evolve into city-states which, due to the harsh environment they inhabited, formed pacts known as zaqaaphs.

These were similar to leagues, but with a layered structure in which each member compensated for the key weaknesses of the others, rather than offering generalized support—thus creating a more consolidated system than a typical league.

However, although the zaqaaphs maintained regional peace, this would not last long due to the same flaw that had affected the tribes, leading into the third, fourth, and fifth stages.

The Third and Fourth Stages

These took place from the 3rd to the 5th century and consisted of the formation of various theocracies, not very different from those found in other parts of the world such as Barsa or neighboring Ruach, which itself had been one before joining Nilfgaard.

In the Hatarian case, these were clearly an evolution—albeit a very gradual one—of the zaqaaphs and their layered structure. However, this proved insufficient for the same underlying reason, which led to the formation of federations that eventually divided the territory into two.

These federations would likely have come into conflict with one another if not for the final stage.

The Birth of the Kingdom

The kingdom emerged in the 8th century as a result of climatic changes and migratory pressures. By that time, the overall temperature of the Korath had risen by up to three degrees, triggering large-scale migrations of various groups that had survived in the desert—including some Aen Manche elves—toward more habitable regions.

A notable example were the Suchaki of the Suchak Valley in western Korath, who migrated south into Barsa.

These migrating groups reached the northern regions of what is now Hatarqa and came into conflict with both federations. Faced with this threat, the federations were forced to unite in order to repel them.

Following the defeat and vassalization of these tribes, and out of fear of future incursions, the federations themselves merged—giving rise to modern Hatarqa.

The layered structure of its monarchical system is a direct inheritance from these earlier forms: the federations, which had evolved from theocratic structures, themselves a gradual development from the zaqaaphs.

The Invasion of Ruach (9th Century A.R)

Only a century after its formation as a country, Hatarqa faced an attempted invasion by Ruach. The High Priest of Shamsat—a solar deity of that land—Aslanbek, the de jure founder of the Ruach theocracy, deemed the Hatarians to be primitive barbarians who had not seen the light of the sun nor the truth of Shamsat—that the world was perfect rather than terrible.

This conclusion arose after the first contacts between the peoples of both regions following centuries of separation, particularly through encounters with the Hatarian priesthood.

A combination of state propaganda and religious fervor led to a rapid escalation, and within a matter of months, Aslanbek and his forces marched to conquer the country.

Initially, the campaign was successful, nearly securing at least the southern regions of Hatarqa. However, fate intervened: at the *Battle of Arikaqarta*, a powerful reflection of sunlight caused Aslanbek to fail to see an incoming arrow, which struck him in the heart and killed him.

His death disoriented the troops, shattered the chain of command, and triggered a crisis of faith. This allowed the Hatarians to reclaim lost ground.

In the aftermath, Aslanbek's son, Vakha, assumed power to restore stability once the troops returned home. As a result, the Ruach theocracy effectively emerged, with Aslanbek having (indirectly) established his dynasty.

This also led to the establishment of relatively cordial relations between the two territories in order to avoid a counter-invasion—later paving the way for religious syncretism when Ruach became integrated into the Empire.

The Attempted Annexation by the Republic of Nilfgaard (11th Century A.R.)

In the 11th century—more specifically between the 1030s and 1040s—Nilfgaard conquered Ruach when its theocracy fell to the Kingdom of Daerlan, which had invaded it. Initially, this was framed as an effort to “*secure the Alban population within the invaders’ territory*,” effectively resulting in Ruach being divided between the two powers: the north under Daerlan and the south under the Republic.

This situation changed in the 1040s, when the Senate passed the so-called Law of the Great Guardian. This law stemmed from a combination of factors: the growing power of Daerlan (seen as a threat to the Republic), and the reputational cost of failing to act against a people portrayed as genocidal slaveholders—while Nilfgaard positioned itself as the “*great civilization*” of the southern western coast. Notably, Nilfgaard had even developed a codex of rights for slaves, derived from an earlier civilization and its own elven-influenced past.

This law enabled the adoption of the title Imperator for the first time (a title that would later evolve into “*Emperor*” once Nilfgaard ceased to be a republic). The title had previously been used in the Imperium—the first human empire and conceptual predecessor to Nilfgaard—as well as in the then-independent Duchy of Vicovaro, one of the Imperium’s successor states and a major influence on pre-imperial Nilfgaard.

This led to a series of wars against Daerlan and other neighboring states, resulting in the conquest of the entire Alba Basin and even territories beyond, though with mixed results. By the end of these campaigns, very few states—such as [Vicovaro](#) or [Etolia](#)—remained independent.

Although Barsameni taifas such as Bukhala were annexed by the 1060s, Nilfgaard also attempted to annex Hatarqa as a forward outpost to establish a surveillance frontier in the desert. However, this was not pursued through conquest, but rather through a proposal of peaceful union, as the Republic was exhausted from prolonged warfare and was mindful of the climate and dangers of the region.

Unfortunately, the offer was rejected. Nilfgaard would never incorporate Hatarqa—neither then nor later—partly due to the harsh environment and limited strategic value compared to the Nordling territories it would later conquer during the Northern Wars (1239–1272).

However, this (combined with the later loss of Zerrikanian caravans a century afterward) led to the emergence of the first Hatarian guides along the western coast.

They were especially sought after to guide troops through the desert in newly incorporated frontier regions such as Magne—teaching them about its dangers, safe routes, and survival—in exchange for large sums of money.

The Fading (Mid to Late 12th Century A.R.)

With the loss of Zerrikanian caravan routes through the territory due to the Day of Fire, the country experienced what came to be known as The Fading (Hatarian: *Avada*), a devastating famine that killed up to 30% of the population. It also triggered mass displacement toward the Ruach border, with some populations even settling within the imperial province in order to escape the crisis.

This increased contact soon led to the emergence of syncretic religions. These became popular and drew the attention of Nilfgaard.

The famine situation came to an end toward the end of the century, when the economy stabilized and improved, leading to what became known as the Great Return. This recovery was largely due to pressure from the then-young central imperial government on Ruach to become more involved in the neighboring nation's economy—both to prevent further large-scale migration and to avoid the decline of one of its most popular religions, that of the Great Sun.

In fact, this situation with Hatarqa would later serve as one of the motivations behind the establishment of the March 8th Edict, which made the religion of the Great Sun the official faith of Nilfgaard and banned others.

The Northern Wars (1239–1272 A.R.)

The Northern Wars triggered the migration of small groups of Nordlings into the Korath Desert after being rejected by the **gnomes** of the Tir Tochair Mountains, forcing them to move either further north or east. Most chose the latter—fearing that the Empire might take full control of the western coast—and, for obvious reasons, ended up in Hatarqa.

Of these migrants, many eventually married Hatarians, giving rise to the first new ethnic group in the region in a long time. Alongside this, a social custom became established: when a non-Hatarian marries a Hatarian, the non-Hatarian automatically converts to the spouse's religion.

The Haaki Invasion (14th Century A.R.)

During the 14th century, Hatarqa remained relatively stable. The most notable development was another influx of Nordlings—this time somewhat larger—resulting from the Haaki Invasion (1350) of the Northern Kingdoms (technically both the North and part of Nilfgaard, since when Ithlinne prophesied it, the North extended as far as the vassal kingdom of Ebbing, from where the invasion began).

This migration further expanded the previously established ethnic group within Hatarqa.

Far Future

As the glaciation foretold by Ithlinne—the [White Frost](#)—spread across the northern hemisphere, it brought about a slow but inexorable climatic shift.

The region where Hatarqa lies gradually began to re-green, and roughly midway through the consolidation of the glaciation, it could be said that it became, to some extent, the paradise its inhabitants had once longed for.

Only for it to later become a desert once again.

A frozen desert—but a desert nonetheless.

Culture

Alchemy

Alchemy in the country is fairly developed—not to the level of Zerrikania or Núchtel, but still significant. In this case, it does not focus directly on humans, but rather on improving soil fertility and agricultural yield.

Architecture

People tend to live in cities. This is because, despite their size, if something happens there are always people available to assist, and they are also easier to defend.

The buildings in these cities are made of pumice stone, whose porosity allows humidity to be filtered—something very necessary during several months of the year (though with opposite effects depending on the season).

The structure of these buildings is spherical, as this allows for better distribution of moisture within the pumice. Additionally, they are constructed in such a way that a block can be removed to extract water without causing the building to collapse (something very useful during the dry month).

More importantly, however, is their form. To achieve better ventilation and remain cool, these buildings are essentially double skyscrapers (extending both upward and downward), inhabited by multiple families, with the elderly living in the deepest levels to avoid health issues.

The color of these buildings varies, but they are usually bright colors that both reflect heat and blend with the surrounding landscape to reduce the likelihood of attacks, such as those from flying monsters.

Cities also tend to be built as thick straight lines, both to confuse enemies from a distance—making them appear like mirages—and for transport efficiency (one side for outgoing movement, the other for incoming, with two smaller ends where circulation can change).

Each city typically consists of five skyscrapers—four on each side and one in the center—surrounded by non-residential buildings that revolve around them. Beyond these lie open areas (usually dedicated to crops), followed by another open zone used for internal surveillance, and finally the city wall, where external surveillance takes place.

The city wall itself is hollow, housing those who serve as guards within it.

Calendar

In Hatarqa, a distinct calendar is followed, which is approximately a century and a half ahead of the Nordling calendar. In this system, the months are named after the seasons and their associated climate. The calendar consists of five months (Dry Month, Fog Month, Rain Month, Blooming Month, Temperate Month), each lasting 73 days and divided into nearly 15 weeks (more precisely, 14.6). This means that no month ends with a full week, but rather almost—essentially on what would be equivalent to a Saturday.

Coat of Arms

The coat of arms is more religious than political, having been designed this way to further reinforce unity.

It consists of a cloud placed vertically, within which are five circles of different colors (red, brown, blue, green, and yellow), arranged with three above and two below. These represent the five gods—the five components with which the world was created.

The cloud itself symbolizes that everything is part of the greater entity.

Currency

The currency of the country is the anan (Hatarian: *cloud*), which is made of shanalium, one of the rarest metals in the region, and is shaped according to the forms of the clouds visible at the moment of its crafting.

Its name derives both from the importance of clouds—since they bring rain, that is, water—and from how the pure metal reacts rapidly to air, oxidizing in a way that resembles how clouds change color at dawn and dusk.

It is important to note that, depending on whether other metals are included in the alloy—even in small quantities—the color of the oxidation changes. This makes the coins nearly impossible to counterfeit, as pure shanalio produces a very specific color: a bright orange.

Daily Life

Daily life in Hatarqa begins around 17:00 in the afternoon due to the heat and continues into the early morning, more specifically until around 5:00. People usually wake up at 13:00 due to the intense heat and use the four hours prior to the start of their day as leisure time.

Diet

The local diet is primarily protein-based (due to the limited vegetation that grows in the region), as well as quite rich in carbohydrates in order to sustain energy throughout much of the day. Vegetables are often replaced by the fruits of various types of cacti that do grow in the area, which are prepared in many different ways—both domesticated and wild varieties.

Legumes and other crops are also consumed, though not as much as one might expect, since not all are suited for dry farming or capable of adapting to the coastal desert climate of the country.

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The higher classes, such as the monarchy and merchants, tend to enjoy a more varied diet thanks to imports from Ruach.

Discrimination

Discrimination based on appearance is virtually nonexistent in Hatarqa, whether one is human or non-human. The only exception is mild prejudice toward foreigners, which tends to fade after a few days if the individual proves to be receptive.

This is due to a simple reason: life in the desert, which makes any form of life valued for its potential usefulness.

Non-Humans

The only non-humans present in Hatarqa are some tribes of [Aen Manche](#)—the desert elves—which have been integrated. Locals refer to them as shupra'am (Hatarian: *people with beauty*). Additionally, until 1146, witchers from the School of the Manticore were also present, traveling alongside the Zerrikanian caravans they protected on routes toward the western coast. This ended after the incident of the Day of Fire, when the Zerrikanians chose to adopt the more costly (but safer) maritime route.

Government

Hatarqa is ruled by an absolute layered pentarchy. It resembles a typical absolute monarchy only in that power ultimately resides entirely within the crown.

However, in this layered pentarchy, authority does not rest solely in the monarch, but in the entire royal family. Each member governs different aspects of the realm with absolute authority, ranked from less important to more important domains. The equivalent of the king governs the most critical aspects; below them, the equivalent of a prince; then an infant; then a great; and finally a duke at the lowest level.

All members of this layered pentarchy are usually related to one another, and their title depends on the degree of kinship. This ranges from second cousins (duke equivalent), cousin (great equivalent), younger sibling (infant equivalent), older sibling (prince equivalent), and parent (king equivalent).

In the event of the monarch's death, all those below move up one rank, and a new family member is introduced at the lowest level.

Once obtained, royal titles are typically used as prefixes to the name.

Order of Royal Governance and Equivalent Titles:

1. **Mâk**- (king)
2. **Sâr**- (prince)
3. **Yâl**- (infant)
4. **Râb**- (great)
5. **Allû**- (duke)

Administrative Division

The country is divided into five zones, each of which is further divided into five regions, which are in turn divided into five areas. These areas are divided into five sectors, and the sectors are further divided into five parcels, which essentially correspond to the area of a city and its surrounding territory.

In total, there are five major cities, ten large towns, and fifteen major villages.

Vassals

As the only country in the entire desert, the territory does have vassals—though not in the traditional sense (i.e., other states). Instead, they take the form of tribes who are permitted to live along the northern frontier due to the more favorable climatic conditions, in exchange for protecting it from all kinds of threats.

In fact, it is likely that the witcher [Pardus of Korath](#) came from one of these peoples—more specifically, from members of the Madishal tribe.

Education

Education is free, with schools or academies specialized in different professions. This is because, in order to survive in the long term in the desert, education cannot be left in private hands due to the multiple conflicting interests that would arise if it were.

However, access is restricted by both gender and social estate. Individuals can only attend a specific set of institutions depending on their gender and status, with others being inaccessible. This restriction also applies upward—those of higher status cannot access “*lower*” academies.

The only exception are Sources, due to their nature and the fact that they can be born into any kind of family.

Language

Several languages are spoken in Hatarqa, which can be grouped into three main areas: northern border languages, southern border languages, and central languages.

The northern border languages consist of pidgins and creoles used with the tribes inhabiting the deeper parts of the desert—vassals of the country—as well as the respective tribal languages of each group.

The southern border languages include Hatarian (southern dialect), [Nilfgaardian](#) (Ruach dialect), and a Hatarian–Nilfgaardian creole.

The central languages consist solely of Standard Hatarian, which is, for obvious reasons, the dominant language.

Word Formation

Words in Hatarian are formed by combining five root words, which are then shortened into a single term. For example, the word for *water* is composed of the roots *transparency*, *life*, *movement*, *growth*, and *cleanliness*.

Magic

Although mages exist—the so-called ashshaphs—they do not hold the same relevance as in other countries.

In their case, due to how difficult it is to handle one of the most abundant forms of magic in the region—fire magic—they are limited. Fire is extremely dangerous both in casting itself, due to its instability, which can cause an unlucky caster to involuntarily self-immolate, and, more dangerously—for both the mage and others—the inherent risk of addiction tied to drawing and using Fire.

This addiction can turn a talented sorcerer into a mad shadow of themselves. Visions of the future or promises of great power tempt them to draw more and more, ensnaring untrained Fire mages and slowly altering their personality: making it harder for them to control themselves and their use of Power, leading to outbursts of anger that often result in destructive spells being cast at something—or someone. If not helped in time, they eventually become crazed,

bloodthirsty individuals, spreading death and destruction until their own peers are forced to put them down.

For this reason, most mages in the country specialize in earth magic and its adjacent para-elements, para-elements related to fire (which are less dangerous), or entirely different para-elements.

Only the country's unique magical profession—the dikaheyha (Hatarian: *tamer of power*)—can fully engage with this type of magic. They fulfill a hybrid role between priest, monk, paladin, law enforcer, [witch/warlock](#), druid, [elementalist](#), and elite military force (which also explains their casting method, allowing both hands to remain free, and why the country has not been conquered by the empire).

These are Sources trained to use emotional temperance (not to be confused with concentration—one may feel an emotion and still be focused) to draw from Ley Lines and cast extremely powerful spells—comparable to multiple priestly miracles combined. However, such spells are highly exhausting, as they require progressively deeper levels of inner calm, eventually reaching a peak state of total calm.

They cast through breath: exhalation being offensive, and inhalation defensive. This allows them to channel power gradually through controlled breathing until both their energy and breath are depleted or the caster is at their maximum capacity of air in their lungs.

Unlike fire mages, they do not suffer from magical addiction, though they still face the dangers of casting itself.

For example, while a mage might cast a miniature storm spell multiple times, a dikaheyha could gradually unleash a far more complex spell—such as a miniature storm that freezes and then explodes, the explosion transforming into water—but would require a long recovery afterward.

It is worth noting that, although they bear some resemblance to the nauali of Núchtetl further south, they are unrelated. Nauali are trained to regulate and maintain specific emotional states for channeling; dikaheyha are trained to use calm as the method of channeling; witches and warlocks, by contrast, rely on emotional fluctuations prior to casting.

Both mages and dikaheyha are trained in academies: the former in purely magical institutions, and the latter in mibhnehs (a blend of military academy, temple, witch covenant, and druidic circle).

Mentality

The local mentality can be described as individualist-collectivist, with a strong future-oriented tendency, as well as utilitarian yet static. Even emotions are often directed toward something useful; otherwise, they are seen as one of the many burdens imposed by reality.

Regarding the first aspect, actions are carried out for one's own benefit because they indirectly benefit everyone else. In this sense, it can also be described as a form of one-directional ethical pseudo-altruism. This is most clearly reflected in religion: one improves their own communion with the divine, then spreads that knowledge so that others may understand—and even surpass them—because this will ultimately bring forth the Nuhra, whose individual act (perfect understanding) will free all from the suffering of the material world.

It should be noted, however, that the balance between individualism and collectivism varies significantly depending on social estate and profession. Higher estates tend to be more collectivist, middle estates more individualist, and lower estates occupy an intermediate position between the two.

Additionally, this mentality is characterized by unintentional misogyny (not rooted in a belief of superiority), flexible rigidity—meaning the maintenance of a given structure over long periods that can nevertheless change under specific circumstances, like a spoon bent by force that never returns to its original shape—and a form of collective ethnosolipsism (where anything outside Hatarians within Hatarqa is seen as a manifestation of flawed reality testing them). This is accompanied by a layer of kindness derived from curiosity, and a complex mental filter shaped by the language, which leads to the assimilation of foreign ideas through their cultural lens until they eventually become their own.

Prostitution

Prostitution is frowned upon, but not for religious reasons or due to the degradation of women. Rather, it is for a more basic concern: *protection*.

It is considered dangerous both for the women involved and for society as a whole. If a woman engages in prostitution, she may contract diseases—transmissible illnesses that can be severe and lead to high mortality.

If many of them die, the probability that one might give birth to the Nuhra decreases, while the likelihood of reality itself dying increases.

Religion

Their religion is layerist (that is, it holds that reality is composed of different layers—five, to be precise). These layers emerged because existence is imperfect, having been created in a flawed, malfunctioning state, and therefore must be repaired; otherwise, it will eventually die.

Its ultimate goal is for its followers, through communion with the divine, to understand these five layers as perfectly as possible within their limitations before death. This is so that the five gods—who are in fact the five key organs of a greater entity—can eliminate their defects and function better. Then, after death, the faithful return as spirits to help new followers understand the layers even more deeply.

Over a process spanning millennia, this would eventually lead to a point where the layers are perfectly understood, the gods function without defect, and the greater entity becomes perfect. This perfection would cause the layers themselves to dissolve, bringing about paradise for all.

Before that, however, the Nuhra would arise—the final human, the one who achieves complete understanding and brings an end to imperfect reality.

This means that worship of the gods is literally an act of maintenance rather than faith in the traditional sense; it simply grants more time for the Nuhra to appear.

This is also why women hold such an important role in the priesthood, as they are the only ones capable of bringing new souls into existence—and thus, one day, the Nuhra.

Finally, it should be noted that concepts such as hell do not exist in this religion, as reality itself is already considered hell. Demons of the [Chasm](#), when they appear in the material world, are not seen as traditional demons, but rather as “*viruses*” of reality attempting to destroy it before it could be repaired.

In addition to Nuhrism—the main religion—there are also syncretic cults combining the Nilfgaardian Great Sun with Nuhrism along the Ruach border, as well as syncretic blends between tribal religions and Nuhrism in the north, alongside the tribal religions themselves.

Ancestor Worship

Ancestor worship exists within the local religion. It is believed that if ancestors

are venerated, they will be more likely to appear as spirits, thereby helping the living better understand the layers of existence and accelerating the coming of the Nuhra.

Social Structure

The social structure is similar to that of other countries in the sense that it is pyramidal. In this case, it is divided into five estates: the monarchy, merchants, clergy (including the dikaheyhas), artisans (with blacksmiths and jewelers being the most important), and finally the rest of the population (soldiers, mages, peasants, and so on).

However, it is a somewhat fluid structure, as marriage between different estates is allowed, and thus one may rise in status through marriage.

Additionally, similar to how the monarchy functions, one can ascend through blood relations and access certain levels of advancement depending on the degree of kinship.

For example, if a merchant has a relative in the monarchy who is a second cousin, they cannot access a title equivalent to duke, but they may enter the court—though only if they are the heir and the relative has already passed away.

The same applies in reverse: if a peasant has a merchant relative and becomes their heir for some reason, they may access part of their wealth if they are a distant relative, or inherit everything if they are close—thus moving into a higher estate.

It should be noted that this is not common, but rather possible under the right circumstances.

Symbols

There are many popular symbols in the country. However, the most prominent is undoubtedly the number five, a religious symbol. According to local belief, the world was created in five days by five gods, who are the five key organs of a greater entity, using five components.

This symbol is present everywhere, from the calendar to administrative organization, and even in clothing, which is composed of five pieces.

Utensils

In Hatarqa, forks do not exist. Instead, people use spoons whose tips are sharp enough to provide grip for certain foods, but not sharp enough to cause injury to the mouth. The concept of a fork is as foreign in this country as the use of chopsticks is outside the distant [Tuyotuki Islands](#) in the [Eastern Sea](#).

Similarly, tools such as hoes, rakes, and pitchforks do not exist as separate implements. Instead, there is a hybrid tool combining shovel, rake, pitchfork, and hoe—resembling a giant spoon.

As for knives, they are designed in a pentagonal shape, with each side serrated. Each side features five large points and five large indentations.

This design of points and indentations is also reflected, to some extent, in swords and axes.

Weapons Laws

In Hatarqa, only law enforcement forces, or those with explicit authorization from the government—such as mercenaries or caravan guards—are permitted to carry weapons.

Weapons themselves are generally similar to those found elsewhere, but feature very distinctive designs. Particularly notable are axes with heart-shaped blades and serrated swords, the latter inspired by fossils of the comb sawfish.

Women's Rights and Sexual Minorities

The situation regarding female equality is not positive in Hatarqa. For a simple reason: the hostile environment forces greater protection over those who can give rise to new life. Greater protection leads to increased control to prevent unrest that could result in violence and death. This, in turn, leads to a patriarchal system.

As a result, the role of women in society is limited to specific areas—those considered less dangerous—most notably the priesthood, local trade (but not regional or national, as that would involve travel and thus risk), and domestic roles focused on childbirth and household management.

The situation is somewhat better for women in positions of power, such as consorts, due to the limited cultural influence of Zerrikanian caravans that once passed through the region, though not by much.

The only clear exception to this system are female dikaheyhas, as failing to train a Source leads to mental instability—posing a danger both to the woman and to others, thus creating a structural contradiction that forces their inclusion.

Additionally, combined with religious beliefs, male promiscuity is not frowned upon. More pregnancies mean a higher chance of bringing forth the Nuhra, which further worsens the situation.

Thus, this is not a patriarchy based on “*you are inferior and must obey*,” but rather “*you are too valuable, and must be protected to the point of absolute control to avoid harm*.”

It should be noted that, while common, this system is not uniform. In the area inhabited by the vassal tribes, each group maintains its own culture, which is not necessarily patriarchal. These differences are tolerated by the Hatarians, largely because these groups are considered expendable due to their position on the frontier.

Regarding major sexual minorities, the situation is similar: if one cannot contribute to reproduction, one is persecuted.

This is less severe in the case of bisexual individuals (“*if they correct their course*”), pansexual individuals (if it is well concealed), demisexuals, asexuals (if they manage to have at least one child), and others.

Among mages, there exists a form of liberalism similar to that found in the North, but practiced in secrecy. If discovered, a dikaheyha may be sent to eliminate them as an example.

Demographics

The country has a high population density, as its population is concentrated in cities. Geographically, however, it is not evenly distributed.

Most settlements (if not almost all) are concentrated along the border with Ruach, both due to the climate—to take advantage of the more humid seasons—and for economic reasons, given the commercial importance of the imperial province.

From there, settlements gradually decrease until reaching the northern frontier, home to the vassal tribes. Beyond that lie vast stretches of uninhabited land, as the Korath is what it is.

The capital, Katsehqarta, is located precisely at the boundary between Ruach and Hatarqa.

At least one city exists near the northern frontier—Īraqarta—but it is much smaller compared to the others. It serves as a trade hub and transit point for visitors from the Korath, such as nomadic groups like the Mardu or travelers from distant lands like Melukka (and formerly Zerrikania). It also functions as an administrative point to relay orders from the crown to the vassal tribes.

Average Number of Children per Woman

The average number of children per woman is typically five. This is due both to the number’s sacred significance and to the high infant mortality rate caused by the harsh environment.

People

Regarding ethnic groups, the country is diverse, but this diversity—much like its languages—is regionally structured.

Along the border with Ruach, one can find Nilfgaardians from other provinces, “pure” Nilfgaardians (that is, from the Lower Alba), and Ruache (a distinct ethnic group related to the Nilfgaardians), both Hatarianized and non-Hatarianized, as well as the Hatarians, who are the majority ethnic group.

The Hatarians themselves are divided into three subgroups, all sharing an olive skin tone that ranges from light, almost pinkish olive to darker olive depending on the region: lighter tones near the Ruach border, standard olive in the central region, and darker olive in the north.

It should also be noted, as mentioned previously, that they are ethnically related to the Ruache, although they diverged from them long ago.

In the central region, Hatarians are predominant—almost exclusively so—with the aforementioned skin tones. Hair colors such as beach blonde are as common as black in other regions (due to higher sunlight exposure and genetic factors), followed by light brown, dark brown and black, the latter two which appear with a rarity comparable to blonde and ginger hair elsewhere. Eye colors are varied due to genetic influence from the Aen Manche, though never the unusual colors of elves—rather, human variants that approach them but remain within darker tones. For example: not

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yellow eyes, but dark green approaching dark yellow; not purple, but very dark blue nearing purple; instead of red, a deep reddish-brown, and so on.

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In terms of physique, Hatarians tend to have an average build, as they have the greatest access to resources.

The northern region is the most diverse, as each tribe is nearly unique due to centuries of adaptation to desert life. However, most individuals have very dark skin due to high sun exposure. For instance, Pardus of Korath—one of the most notable figures—had, prior to being subjected to the [Trial of the Grasses](#), a complexion described by Grandmaster [Guxart](#) as “*dark as a pitch-black night*,” which the corrupted feline mutations later altered to a soft olive tone. Based on this example, traits such as slanted (but not almond-shaped) eyes also appear, likely as an adaptation to intense light.

To these tribes must be added the results of intermixing—between tribes, between tribes and Hatarians, and among mixed groups themselves.

The country’s population is estimated to be between 30,000 and 80,000 people, including the tribes—limited by the harsh environment.

Economy

Most of the economy is centered on the primary sector, and to a lesser extent, the tertiary sector.

The primary sector is mainly focused on mining. This is due to two simple reasons: the climate and the soil, which make agriculture and livestock difficult to sustain. As a result, being underground in tunnels with air currents becomes a preferable alternative.

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This does not mean that agriculture and livestock do not exist—rather, as mentioned, they are very difficult to maintain. Only a few types of plants and animals adapted to high humidity, poor soil, and frequent fogs can survive, making these activities largely subsistence-based.

The tertiary sector, unfortunately, weakened after the shift in Zerrikanian trade routes. While it still exists, it is no longer as strong. It mainly consists of lodging, repairs, tolls, and similar services for caravans traveling through the region toward Nilfgaard or the rest of the [western coast](#)—now

primarily coming from the northern peninsula of [Melukka](#).

However, the loss of Zerrikanian trade also led to diversification. Services such as mercenary work or guiding expeditions through the Korath are now offered, often for large sums of money. These are especially popular among imperial troops tasked with patrolling the western Korath.

On the other hand, its main trading partner is Ruach, from which it imports most goods. In return, the Nilfgaardian province receives a wide variety of metals and minerals, some of them unique to Hatarqa.

Etymology

This name was given by its inhabitants because the region represents a rupture or break from the almost inhospitable living conditions found in the rest of the Korath Desert.

Examples of Hatarian Names

Hatarian names are composed of three parts: the given name, the first surname—which is the father’s name with the prefix bar- or brata- (depending on whether the individual is male or female)—and the second surname, which usually indicates the profession (not the title, as titles are placed before the given name) with a prefix denoting rank within that profession.

Names are typically written using the symbol “|” to separate each element and avoid confusion.

An example would be: *Allû-Aqiba | Bar-Pusai | Amira-Ragla*, which translates as “Duke” Aqiba, son of Pusai, soldier with the rank of military commander.

Male Names

Abthat, Addaiyh, Ananto, Aqire, Aqarkomavh, Aqarzabbad, Cephass, Ezrat, Gabbaiy, Hanan, Itai, Kalla, Karnaba, Karthoma, Lahman, Maran, Neri, Obadia, Qoma, Rabban, Thoma, Zebadia.

Female Names

Amira, Amathzabbai, Beruria, Dahba, Darda, Elisheba, Kelila, Mariam, Marthat,

Nashu, Nura, Phoebe, Rathanath, Razya, Ruma, Salome, Saphira, Shalmuna, Tabitha, Talitha, Walika, Zemira.

Unisex Names

Adi, Ami, Araz, Aviv, Bani, Bhisaksa, Darda, Drobara, Edentü, Galya, Gili, Jobassa, Lani, Maya, Mari, Nai, Nura, Orel, Raz, Ruma, Shahar, Shaya, Sinkhara, Tal, Yona, Ziv, Zohar.

Examples of Complete Names

- *Abbathe | Bar-Hanan | Sapra-Katoba*
- *Addai | Bar-Zebadia | Amira-Ragla*
- *Amira | Brata-Neri | Sapra-Dayana*
- *Anan | Bar-Aqi | Tabbaya-Gada*
- *Araz | Bar-Ezra | Qashisha-Umaya*
- *Aviv | Brata-Kalla | Tabbaya-Nahra*
- *Beruria | Brata-Gabbai | Sapra-Alpaya*
- *Cephas | Bar-Itai | Amira-Hayla*
- *Darda | Brata-Maran | Qashisha-Edta*
- *Edentü | Brata-Qoma | Sapra-Remza*
- *Ezra | Bar-Rabban | Qashisha-Kanma*
- *Gili | Brata-Thoma | Tabbaya-Sena*
- *Hanan | Bar-Obadia | Amira-Parda*
- *Mariam | Brata-Lahman | Qashisha-Malka*
- *Nura | Brata-Anan | Sapra-Kawkba*
- *Raz | Bar-Shahar | Amira-Tura*
- *Saphira | Brata-Zohar | Tabbaya-Rima*
- *Shaya | Bar-Ziv | Sapra-Mill*
- *Tabitha | Brata-Addai | Qashisha-Bita*
- *Zohar | Bar-Maya | Amira-Qala*

Flora and Fauna

In Hatarqa, one can find xerophytic, halophytic, and succulent species adapted to aridity and to fog when it arrives. The vegetation includes cacti, drought-resistant shrubs, lichens, and ephemeral plants that bloom after rainfall, such as blue everlasting flowers, bellflowers, and various succulents. Particularly notable

are the aforementioned cacti (Cactaceae), as well as orchids (Orchidaceae), alstroemerias, and various grasses that form fog-based ecosystems.

On the other hand, the fauna consists mainly of small mammals (with the exception of camels, dromedaries, and desert lions), including rodents, reptiles, a wide variety of insects, and several types of birds—mostly scavengers or omnivores with scavenging tendencies.

Geography

The landscape is largely flat, divided into three main zones. First, a semi-arid territory (though not extremely dry), forming the blurred frontier with the Siwan Wastes, which features occasional hills. Second, sandy terrain—the majority of the country and one of the few areas of the Korath with dunes—formed by dust carried by the winds that move clouds from the Siwan Wastes toward Hatarqa, where it accumulates. This region is notable for its range of tones, from brown through red to the more orange hues that dominate most of the desert (including an area known as Gichorbaryâ, literally *the very red desert*, for this reason). Finally, there is the rocky territory, which effectively marks the beginning of the rest of the vast expanse of the Frying Pan.

Magical Orography

Due to being part of the Korath, most of the ley lines that cross the region are of [fire](#) (and its para-elements) and [earth](#) (and its para-elements). There are some water ley lines, but they are either very scarce or have so many intersections that they result in a para-element not directly related to the main elements.

This means that, although their magic users are highly skilled (as mastering fire is no easy task), elementals—along with other monsters—are a common problem. In fact, the massive 20-meter fire elemental that caused the Day of Fire and the fall of the [School of the Manticore](#) originated from here, having been expelled outward.

Monsters

- A* As in any other part of the world, the [Conjunction](#)(s) left their mark here,
H bringing beings from other realities—monsters. In the case of Hatarqa, as

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in other desert regions, there is a strong presence of [gigascorpions](#), but one can also find lamiae (singular: lamia), [therianthropes](#) such as werefoxes (a desert fox variant) or werecoyotes, adjules, dragonoids such as the arykanae (singular: arykana), rocs, parababiotans, rock dragons, sand trolls, rock trolls, magma trolls, zambazas, and [insectoids](#) such as the rabar (Hatarian: *great enemy*), among many others, including the vast and largely unknown monstrous parafauna that inhabits the deeper reaches of the desert.

Notable Locations

For the full list of known Hatarian locations see Category: Hatarian locations

Cities

- Arikaqarta
- Īraqarta
- Katsehqarta

Notable People

For the full list of known Hatarian locations see Category: Hatarians

Aristocracy

- Allû-Aqiba | Bar-Pusai | Amira-Ragla

Dikaheyhas

- Rhaea | Brata-Kranaris | Dikaheyha-Gmar

Range

Hatarian merchants, mercenaries, and guides can be found from Ruach to

Ebbing within the Nilfgaardian Empire and its spheres of influence, passing through Western Barsa when heading south, and reaching as far as northern Melukka when traveling east.

Image Credits

- *Caravan Guard Gwent Card Art* by Oleksandr Kozachenko
- *Caravan Vanguard Gwent Card Art* by Anton Nazarenko

Trivia

- Shanalium was originally intended to be rubidium^[W], but due to its chemical composition and reactivity, it did not quite fit, so a fictional metal was created instead. The name comes from the Aramaic verb *shana*, meaning to change, to alter, or to be diverse.
- The arykanae are a reference to the Monster of Arica, a supposed dinosaur said to have survived into modern times in the Atacama Desert in Chile.
- The parababiotans are a reference to Babi^[W], a god from Egyptian mythology.
- The zambazas are a reference to the Zamba Zaraa, an armadillo-like cryptid said to inhabit the Gobi Desert^[W].
- The word rabar is composed of *rab* (רַב), a shortened form of *rabba*, used in titles or to indicate chief, and *ār* (אַר), meaning enemy, both in Aramaic. The name was created to give a designation to the unknown insectoid monster that Cirilla of Cintra encounters during her time in the Korath Desert in The Witcher Books.
- Shupra'am derives from the Aramaic words *shupra* (שׁוּפְרָא), meaning *beauty* or *comeliness*, and *'am* (עַם), meaning *people* in the context of different nations or groups, as seen in the Book of Daniel.
- Gichorbaryâ is composed of the words *gichor*, meaning *deep red* or *very red*, and *baryâ*, meaning *desert* or *wilderness*, both in Aramaic.
- The skyscraper-like architecture is inspired by the depiction of the city of Narsis in the Project Tamriel mod,^[↗] but taken to a more extreme level. It is also influenced by various modern proposals that explore building cities downward rather than upward.
- The linear layout is a reference to The Line^[W] in Saudi Arabia.

- The royal titles are invented titles based on Aramaic words for such ranks, taking as reference the [Spanish noble titles](#)^[W] (which have slight differences compared to the rest of Europe).
- The use of breath and inhalation to cast magic is inspired by the [shouts from The Elder Scrolls](#)^[E], but made more complex.
- The dikaheyha are a counter-inspiration of the [sword-singers from the Yokudan culture](#)^[E] in The Elder Scrolls, aiming to make them more complex, with greater limitations and advantages, and less like generic spellswords.
- The situation of women and sexual minorities is more inspired by [Caesar's Legion](#) from *Fallout: New Vegas*, with some elements drawn from Classical Athens, rather than from any radically Islamic legal system. In essence: any low-risk occupation is considered female, while any high-risk occupation is considered male.
- Nuhra means *Light, Brilliance, or Enlightenment* in Aramaic.
- The country's religion is inspired by [Gnosticism](#)^[W].
- Its layered structure is a reference both to the multiple heavens in Gnostic belief and to the idea in the [Bahá'í Faith](#)^[W] that each religion represents a further revelation of God to humanity.
- Part of the existence of this country is intended to justify the mention of the Demiurge that [Vysogota of Corvo](#) makes to Cirilla of Cintra during their conversations in The Witcher Books. It is likely that he learned about it from someone originating from this region, given its relative proximity to the Lower Alba, the imperial core, where Vysogota served as a professor at the Imperial Academy.
- The Nuhra is a reference to the Gnostic Christ, with influences from the awaited Jewish prophet and the hidden prophet found in certain currents of Islam, as well [Siddhartha Gautama](#)^[W], the founder and first Buddha of Buddhism. In short, it can be seen as a synthesis of all these figures.
- The Nuhra is also a counter-inspiration to [Azor Ahai](#)^[E] from *A Song of Ice and Fire*^[E]. If Martin truly intended his work to respond to Tolkien, Lewis, and similar authors—including subverting the “*chosen one*” trope—then such a subversion would require the creation of a figure who ends the world through non-violent means in order to be genuinely subversive. Otherwise, it becomes just another “*legendary hero reborn to fight darkness*,” which falls back into cliché due to its foundational structure. The Nuhra is an attempt (even if only at a religious level) to embody that concept.
- The greater entity is a reference to [Adam Kadmon](#)^[W] from Kabbalah.

- The end of the world proposed by Nuhism is a reference to *Neon Genesis Evangelion*^[W].
- Īraqarta is composed of the Aramaic words *ira* (awake, wide-awake, alert, vigilant, watchful) and *qarta* (קרתא), meaning *city* or *town*.
- Katseh (קצח) means *end* or *extremity* of a country, used to denote a frontier in Aramaic.
- The tribes of the northern region are not based on any African analogue, but are either entirely original or draw inspiration from Aboriginal Australian cultures.
- The vampiric state has not been canonically confirmed, but in the DLC *The Witcher 3: Blood and Wine*, we see the ruins of Tesham Mutna and a book referring to human livestock.
 - At the time when vampires first appeared—during the First Conjunction of the Spheres—the region was elven territory. It would not make sense for the elves to ignore such a major threat without attempting to eliminate it. Additionally, the elves of the elven kingdom that once existed in Toussaint did not encounter humans until the arrival of the Nordlings, and vampires never mention capturing elves as livestock.
 - This creates a significant contradiction if humans had already been present in Toussaint. Therefore, the most consistent explanation is that a powerful vampiric state existed in what is now Toussaint—on par with the elven kingdom but more expansive—and that it brought humans from other regions outside Toussaint to Tesham Mutna, thereby resolving this major inconsistency.
- The vampiric civil war would also explain their concealment within human societies, as such a conflict may have reached near-extinction levels. Otherwise, it would make little sense for beings as powerful as vampires—especially supreme vampires—to remain hidden.
 - It could also account for their adaptation to sunlight, as mentioned by Emiel Regis Rohellec Terzief-Godefroy in the books, which occurred sometime later after the supreme vampires arrived in the world.
 - If we continue speculating, the sunlight may have functioned as a kind of “*biological weapon*” during the war—one to which these types of vampires eventually adapted, both as a result of the

conflict itself and the loss of their “*livestock*.”

- The funerary rites are inspired by the practices of [Zoroastrianism^{\[W\]}](#).
- The presence of ferrets in the cities is a reference to Istanbul, a city well known for its population of semi-wild cats.
- Arika means long in Aramaic.
- The hamnasnep are an even more complex version of the Japanese haikus.
- The main real-world inspiration for the Hatarians are the [Yazidis^{\[W\]}](#). They were deliberately placed outside of Barsa—the “Middle East” analogue of the Witcher world—in order to avoid overloading that already vast and complex region. Additionally, they did not fully fit within Barsa’s structure, as it is composed of taifas.
- Avada (ܐܘܕܐ) means *vanish* or *fade* in Aramaic.
- The custom of a non-Hatarian converting to the religion of their spouse is directly taken from the traditions of the Yazidis.



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